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STRANGE, AARON N				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/839,847

Applicant(s)

NEWMAN ET AL.

Examiner

AARON STRANGE

Art Unit

2153

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 December 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14-27, 29 and 30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14-27, 29 and 30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/C)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-12, 140-17, 29 and 30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claims 1-12, 140-17, 29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.
4. With regard to claim 1, the newly added limitation "The video conference web server ... establishing network connections for the first and second computing devices, and controlling the first and second reflectors" is not adequately described in the specification.

The only portion of the specification discussing a video conference web server appears on pages 21-22, which merely states that the "client ... makes a request to a

VRVS web server [that] contacts an H.323 gateway 915 as indicated by transition 920" (Specification, p.22, ll. 2-4). There is no additional disclosure describing other functionality of the VRVS web server.

Nothing in the specification describes the web server "establishing network connections for the first and second computing devices". At most, the specification appears to describe the web server contacting a gateway and that the *gateway* establishes network connections with the client devices. Additionally, there is no disclosure that describes the web server "controlling the first and second reflectors". The specification simply does not even mention the web server communicating with the reflectors, much less controlling them.

5. Independent claims 9, 16 and 24 contain a substantially identical limitation and are rejected under the same rationale set forth above regarding claim 1.
6. All claims not individually rejected are rejected by virtue of their dependency from the above claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 1-4,6,7,15-19,21,22 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. ("Networking, Videoconferencing and Collaborative Environments, 1998) (cited as reference V in the PTO-892 of 8/25/2004) in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) further in view of Chang (US 6,304,648).

9. With regard to claims 1 and 16, Galvez discloses a virtual room videoconferencing system for transporting packets of videoconferencing data (Fig 3), comprising:

- a first and second computing device (Fig 3, 1 and 5);

- a first reflector (Fig 3,3) connected to said first computing device and a second reflector (Fig 3, "Reflector") coupled to said second computing device;

- a communication path formed between the first and second reflectors for communicating video conference data (Fig 3, "Tunnel").

Galvez fails to specifically disclose that the first and second computing devices use different protocols or a gateway coupled to the server and enabled by the server to contact the first computing device or a video conference web server that receives requests for a video conference from the first and second computing devices, establishes network connections for the first and second computing devices and controls the first and second reflector.

Tucker discloses a similar system for videoconferencing (Col 2, Lines 46-54) and teaches the use of a gateway (Fig 7,708) to enable conferencing using a first protocol

(H.323) (Col 9, Lines 50-54) and a computing device (H.320 gateway) coupled to multiple clients for enabling conferencing between the clients independent of their differing protocols (Col 9, Lines 55-63). These would have been an advantageous addition to the system disclosed by Galvez since it would have allowed various clients using different protocols to conference with each other without requiring the clients to change any settings or software.

Chang discloses a similar system for multimedia conferencing (Abstract) and teaches the use of a video conference web server (web server 24 with conference coordination system) that receives requests from clients (clients submit requests to join conferences)(col. 6, ll. 12-22), establishes network connections for the client devices to participate in the conference (clients join the CCS which establishes connection to the MCU) (col. 6, ll. 23-28), and controls reflectors (MCU 22) associated with the conference (i.e., CCS directs MCU to display photo)(col. 6, l. 57 to col. 7, l. 8). This would have been an advantageous addition to the system disclosed by Galvez since3 it would have provided clients with a central location to store identification information and join conferences.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use gateways to enable conferencing using a first protocol, such s as H.320, as well as to provide a video conference web server to server as a central location for joining conferences and storing identification information of conferees.

10. With regard to claims 2 and 17, Galvez further discloses a packet wherein said packet travels to said first and second computing devices (Packets are sent across the tunnel when participants are in the same virtual room on both sides) (Page 5, Line 1 to Page 6, Line 1).

11. With regard to claims 3 and 18, Galvez further discloses that said packet carries an audio signal (Page 5, Line 3).

12. With regard to claims 4 and 19, Galvez further discloses that said packet carries a video signal (Page 5, Line 3).

13. With regard to claims 6 and 21, Galvez further discloses a user interface (Page 4, Lines 27-28).

14. With regard to claims 7 and 22, Galvez further discloses that said user interface is in a web browser (Web interface) (Page 4, Lines 27-28).

15. With regard to claims 15 and 30, Tucker further discloses that said computing devices are Mbone clients or H.323 clients (Col 2, Lines 46-54).

16. Claims 5 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Galvez et al. in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) further in view of Chang (US 6,304,648) further in view of Ruiu ("An Overview of MPEG-2").

17. With regard to claims 5 and 20, while the system disclosed by Galvez and Tucker shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose that said video signal is compressed in an MPEG 2 format.

Ruiu teaches that the MPEG 2 format is a very efficient and well known video compression method, which converts analog or digital video signals into efficiently transported digital packets. Using MPEG 2 compressions allows video signals to be transmitted using as little as 1/30 of the required bandwidth of the uncompressed signal (Page 2, Lines 1-20). Use of MPEG 2 to compress the video signal would have been advantageous since it would have significantly reduced the bandwidth required to transmit the signal over the network, increasing the overall quality of the transmission.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use MPEG 2 to compress the video signal since it can significantly reduce the bandwidth required to transmit the video signal across the network.

18. Claims 8 and 23 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) further in view of Chang (US 6,304,648) further in view of McCormack et al. (US 6,212,195).

19. With regard to claims 8 and 23, while the system disclosed by Galvez and Tucker shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), including one or more packets carrying audio signals to said first and second computing devices (Page 5, Line 3), it fails to disclose an algorithm configured to determine a single packet from said packet and said one or more additional packets wherein said single packet has a largest audio magnitude.

McCormack teaches a method of choosing between a plurality of incoming audio streams to a conference comprising analyzing the packets to determine which packet has the largest magnitude, and choosing to use that packet as the audio source and discarding the other packets (Col 7, Lines 10-13). This gives priority to the loudest speaker and prevents a combination of audio signals from being played simultaneously, which would make it difficult to understand the speakers.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to analyze incoming audio packets when a plurality of audio packets are received simultaneously to determine which packet has the largest audio magnitude. This allows a single audio stream to be chosen and played to the conference, eliminating the sound of multiple speaking simultaneously. This makes it easier to understand the speakers by limiting the system to one speaker at a time.

20. Claims 9-12 and 24-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) further in view of DeGollado et al. (US 6,411,623) further in view of Chang (US 6,304,648)

21. With regard to claims 9 and 24, Galvez discloses a virtual room videoconferencing system (Fig 3) comprising:

a first and second computing device (Fig 3, 1 and 2);

a first reflector connected to said first and second computing devices (Fig 3, 3);

However, Galvez fails to specifically disclose a first encoder/decoder box connected to the first computing device for encoding/decoding video conference data for the first computing device using said first protocol, a third computing device connected to said first and second computing devices for enabling conferencing independent of the first and second protocol or a video conference web server that receives requests for a video conference from the first and second computing devices, establishes network connections for the first and second computing devices and controls the first and second reflector.

Tucker discloses a similar system for videoconferencing (Col 2, Lines 46-54) and teaches the use of a computing device (H.320 gateway) coupled to multiple clients for enabling conferencing between the clients independent of their differing protocols (Col 9, Lines 55-63). These would have been an advantageous addition to the system disclosed by Galvez since it would have allowed various clients using different protocols to conference with each other without requiring the clients to change any settings or software.

DeGollado also discloses a similar system for distribution of audio/video data (Col 5, Lines 44-46). DeGollado teaches using a first encoder/decoder box connected to

a first and second computing device and a second encoder/decoder box connected to a third computing device (Col 6, Lines 14-36 and Fig 2). This allows the video signals from each device to be encoded for transfer over the network and decoded by the receiving devices.

Chang discloses a similar system for multimedia conferencing (Abstract) and teaches the use of a video conference web server (web server 24 with conference coordination system) that receives requests from clients (clients submit requests to join conferences)(col. 6, ll. 12-22), establishes network connections for the client devices to participate in the conference (clients join the CCS which establishes connection to the MCU) (col. 6, ll. 23-28), and controls reflectors (MCU 22) associated with the conference (i.e., CCS directs MCU to display photo)(col. 6, l. 57 to col. 7, l. 8). This would have been an advantageous addition to the system disclosed by Galvez since³ it would have provided clients with a central location to store identification information and join conferences.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use gateways to enable conferencing using a first protocol, such as H.320, a third computing device for enabling conferencing between clients independent of their differing protocols, as well as to provide a video conference web server to server as a central location for joining conferences and storing identification information of conferees.

22. With regard to claims 10 and 25, Galvez further discloses a packet wherein the packet travels to said first and second computing devices (Packets are sent across the tunnel when participants are in the same virtual room on both sides)(Page 5, Line 1 to Page 6, Line 1).

23. With regard to claims 11 and 26, Galvez further discloses that said packet carries streaming video (Page 5, Line 3).

24. With regard to claims 12 and 27, Galvez further discloses that said streaming video is used with a video player (Page 5, Fig 1 and 2).

25. Claims 14 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) further in view of Chang (US 6,304,648) further in view of Zhu et al. (US 6,691,154).

26. With regard to claims 14 and 29, while the system disclosed by Galvez and Tucker shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose a shared desktop configured to be accessed by at least said first and second computing devices.

Zhu et al. (Zhu, hereafter) teaches the use of a shared desktop as a means for one or more users of a conferencing system to share control of a desktop, allowing changes made by any user to be reflected in the desktop displayed to the other users

(Co1 5, Line 42 to Col 6, Line 4). This would provide several advantages by allowing conference participants to exchange information via the shared desktop such as demonstrating how to operate a software program.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a shared desktop to the system disclosed by Galvez. The addition of a shared desktop would allow conference participants to exchange additional information through such operations as demonstrating the operation of a software program.

Conclusion

27. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

28. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to AARON STRANGE whose telephone number is (571)272-3959. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glen Burgess can be reached on 571-272-3949. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/A. S./
Examiner, Art Unit 2153

/John Follansbee/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2151